Planning Menus in the National School Lunch Program: The Enhanced Meal Pattern

The Enhanced Food Based Meal Pattern follows the same structure as the Traditional Meal Pattern, but with different grade/age groupings and increased serving sizes for fruit/vegetable and grain/bread components. The quantities for breakfast are the same as required by the Traditional Meal Pattern, but it is recommended that an additional serving of grain/breads be offered to grades 7 - 12. These enhancements to the Traditional Meal Pattern make it easier to achieve the nutrition goals. Sponsors are encouraged to have their menus analyzed when using either the Traditional or Enhanced Food Based Meal Patterns to ensure that the nutrition goals are met.

| Ennanced Food Based Meal Patterns to ensure that the nutrition goals are met. Food Based Meal Pattern | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Lunch | | | | | |
| Minimum Quantities | | | | | |
| | Required | | | | Option |
| Meal Component | Ages 1-2 | Preschool | Grades K-6 | Grades 7-12 | Grades K-3 |
| Milk (as a beverage) | 1/4 cup | 3/4 cup | 1/2 pint | 1/2 pint | 1/2 pint (8 fl. oz.) |
| Meat/Meat Alternate (quantity of the edible portion as served) | (6 fl. oz.) | (6 fl. oz.) | (8 fl. oz.) | (8 fl. oz.) | (6 11. 02.) |
| A serving of one of the following or a combination to give an equivalent quality: | | | | | |
| Lean meat, poultry or fish | 1 oz. | 1 1/2 oz. | 2 oz. | 2 oz. | 1 1/2 oz. |
| Cheese | 1 oz. | 1 1/2 oz. | 2 oz. | 2 oz. | 1 1/2 oz. |
| Large egg | 1/2 | 3/4 | 1 | 1 | 3/4 |
| Cooked dry beans or peas | 1/4 cup | 3/8 cup | 1/2 cup | 1/2 cup | 3/8 cup |
| Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters | 2 Tbsp. | 3 Tbsp. | 4 Tbsp. | 4 Tbsp. | 3 Tbsp. |
| Yogurt | 4 oz. | 6 oz. | 6 oz. | 8 oz. | 12 oz. |
| The following may be used to meet no more than 50% of the requirement and must be used in combination with any of the above: | | | | | |
| Peanuts, soynuts, tree nuts or seeds, as listed in program guidance, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternate | 1/2 oz.= 50% | ³ / ₄ oz.= 50% | 1 oz.= 50% | 1 oz.= 50% | 3/4 oz.=50% |
| Vegetables/Fruits (2 different sources) 2 or more servings of vegetables or fruits or both to total | 1/2 cup | 1/2 cup | 3/4 cup plus extra 1/2 cup over a week ¹ | 1 cup | 3/4 cup |
| Grains/Breads ³ Must be enriched or whole grain. A | 5 servings per week ¹ | 8 servings per week ¹ | 12 servings per week ¹ | 15 servings per week ¹ | 10 servings per week ¹ |
| serving is a slice of bread or an equivalent serving of biscuits, rolls, etc., or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, macaroni, noodles, other pasta products or cereal grains | Minimum of 1/2 per day ² | Minimum of 1 per day ² | Minimum of 1 per day ² | Minimum of 1 per day ² | Minimum of 1 per day ² |

¹For the purpose of this chart, a week equals five days.